Harassment of Indian Computer Engineers in US

†62. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL:
SHRI SATISH CHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the misbehaviour of emigration officials with Indian computer programmers in USA recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government of India have sent any protest letter to US Government in this regard; and

(d) if so, the US Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) On January 20, 2000, 39 Indian computer professionals working at Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas were arrested for alleged violation of their employment terms under their HI-B visas, by working for a company other than the one listed on their labour certificates. They were released the next day after the company that hired them-Frontier Consulting, Inc. executed bonds for their release.

(c) Ambassador of India in Washington D.C. lodged a strong protest with the State Department over the arrest and handcuffing of the Indian nationals by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) authorities in San Antonio and demanded immediate explanation for the action. The matter was also taken up with INS authorities in Washington as well as with the district Director of Criminal Investigation of the INS in Texas.

(d) The Assistant Secretary of State Department expressed deep regret on behalf of the US Government at the way the Indian nationals were treated and assured the Ambassador they would be

†*Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.*

given a fair and humane treatment. He also expressed similar sentiments to representatives of the media in Washington.

Approaching ICAO for Action against Flight Hijackers

63. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps in seeking action by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and its member countries in apprehending five Pakistani hijackers and their accomplices who hijacked the Indian Airlines flight IC-814 recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response from the various members States in this regard and by when, the extradition process of the hijackers is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. The Government of India has forwarded a report on the hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight IC-814 to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) under the Convention for the Suppression of the Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Montreal Convention of 1971) and the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircrafts (The Hague Convention of 1970). The Government has, in this communication asked ICAO to follow-up with Pakistan, the apprehending and extradition of the hijackers and their accomplices, to India, in accordance with obligations under the above-mentioned Conventions. The Government of India also took up directly with the Government of Pakistan, apprehending and extradition of the hijackers to India. The Government of Pakistan in their response has undertaken to prosecute the hijackers if apprehended.